

EXHIBIT 3  
DATE 2-12-09  
HB 218

House Bill 218  
February 12, 2009  
Presented by Jim Kropp  
House Fish, Wildlife & Parks Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, for the record I am Jim Kropp, Chief of Law Enforcement of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

I stand before you today to speak on behalf of HB 218. This bill does two things: First, it clarifies prohibitions on the use of artificial light used when hunting. Second, it clarifies what constitutes the waste of a fur-bearing animal. Historically, spotlights were commonly used for illegal night hunting. Over the years, other methods utilizing artificial light have also become more common to illegally take animals at night. Courts have questioned whether using such things as vehicle headlights to spot game really constitutes "spotlights." This revision puts the use of any form artificial light under the same category and therefore, eliminates the potential for those who use other means to illegally take animals to elude conviction.

The current laws pertaining to the waste of a fur-bearing animal are limited in scope and do not allow for the prosecution of those who waste furbearer pelts by failing to check traps or pick them up at the close of the season. In more than one instance, the careless acts of individuals have resulted in the waste of the valued part of a furbearer (the pelt.) This bill serves to provide a definition for waste of furbearer and a means to deal with individuals whose carelessness resulting in the waste of the pelt of a furbearer. This is similar to waste of game animal laws currently in place.

We support this bill and urge its passage. Thank you.